SWISS ARMED FORCES INTERNATIONAL COMMAND SWISSINT

Peace support mission of the armed forces
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A Swiss officer on patrol in the rough terrain of the Kashmir mountains.

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CURRENT MISSIONS

1. South Korea
2. Middle East: Israel, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan und Egypt
3. Bosnia-Herzegovina
4. Kosovo
5. DR Congo
6. Ghana
7. South Sudan
8. Mali
9. Kashmir
10. Western Sahara
11. New York
12. Vienna
13. Moldova
14. Mozambique
International peace support is one of the three tasks of the Swiss Armed Forces laid down in the Swiss Constitution and the Swiss Armed Forces Act. SWISSINT (Swiss Armed Forces International Command) is responsible for the conduct of peace support operations.

The implementation of the armed forces’ peace support task includes recruitment and HR management, logistics, financial planning and management, mission-specific training, national command and control during operations, evaluation and PR work for Swiss military contingents and individuals engaged in peace support missions abroad. The Swiss armed forces aim to have up to 500 volunteer servicemen and women deployed on peace support operations at any given time.

The work of SWISSINT is subject to the legal requirements laid down by the Federal Council and parliament, and the guidelines issued by the Chief of the Armed Forces and the Chief of the Armed Forces Operations Command. This brochure provides an insight into the many tasks of SWISSINT.

If you are interested in the personal challenge of participating in a military peacekeeping operation abroad, you will find more information about your application options on page 19. We look forward to meeting you.

Colonel GS Alexander Furer
Commander Armed Forces International Command
SWISSINT
Entrance area to SWISSINT’s command building.
SWISS ARMED FORCES INTERNATIONAL COMMAND SWISSINT

SWISSINT is the national operations command and control centre for military contingents and individuals deployed by the armed forces on peacekeeping missions. SWISSINT is directly subordinate to the Chief of the Armed Forces Operations Command. Its wide range of tasks is explained in detail on the following pages.
The communication and the four staff branches fulfil the following tasks:

**Communication**
The communication team is responsible for providing internal and external information on the peace support mission of the armed forces at Swiss Armed Forces International Command SWISSINT. The team draws up press releases, gives presentations during training courses, attends to journalists in Switzerland, is in charge of preparations for and coordination of visits by journalists to the deployment locations, and maintains its own communication channels such as websites and social media. The team is also engaged in personnel marketing, i.e. presenting military peace support at exhibitions and various events, in order to get suitable men and women that are interested to enrol for a mission. Then, practically every week, there is the obligation to inform people visiting SWISSINT – both civilians and military personnel from Switzerland and abroad – about the peace support mission of the Swiss Armed Forces.

**Staff branch 1 Personnel**
The human resources section is in charge of all efforts involved in recruiting and employing personnel. Each year, it invites around 500 candidates to a personal interview in order to permanently staff or replace about 250 posts within the various missions. Taking account of those who extend their period of service within the contingent, around 900 training and deployment contracts are issued each year. Up to a quarter of those employed commit themselves to a further mission, some even after a longer interval. In order to fill key positions, individual career planning is offered to a few staff members that perform exceptionally well.
**Staff branch 3 / 5 Operations and Planning**

The Tactical Operations Centre (TOC) is responsible for monitoring the situation in the areas where military peace support operations are carried out. All incoming information and daily correspondence are processed, assessed and coordinated at the TOC. A multilingual team with years of mission experience works to ensure that missions are accomplished and that the safety and the well-being of all the volunteers on the ground is maintained. The TOC knows at all times where the Swiss peacekeepers are stationed and is informed about the security situation at the various deployment areas. It works with an intelligence officer, continuously assessing the security of the armed forces personnel. If an extraordinary event occurs, the TOC team forms the information hub and is responsible for planning and coordinating all actions and operations in response. In addition, the Operations and Planning staff also ensures that engagement orders for all missions and existing plans for future mission developments are kept up-to-date.

**Staff branch 4 Logistics**

The SWISSLCOY mission in Kosovo is the most extensive peace support operation being carried out by the Swiss Armed Forces. A maximum of 165 servicemen and women, 560 containers (converted for mission purposes) and up to 150 vehicles have been deployed to the locations in Kosovo. The logistics sector ensures that all material, including mission-specific equipment, is available in good time, so that the fulfilment of the mandate is ensured at all times. This applies worldwide to all missions Switzerland is involved in.

**Staff branch 8 Finances**

The budgeting, supervision and control of funding for peacekeeping amounting to around CHF 54 millions is the responsibility of the finance sector. It entails managing the accounts (financial accounting, accounts payable/receivable), with a total of around 5000 invoices. The finance sector is also the training and auditing agency for three individually-managed accounting entities on location.
Since the Swiss Armed Forces became involved in peace support, more than 12,500 military personnel, including 1,000 women, have been deployed on peacekeeping operations.
The Swiss Armed Forces are actively engaged in peacekeeping. Some 250 Swiss soldiers currently serve in various capacities around the world. Swiss military peacekeeping began in 1953, when the Federal Council sent 146 armed military persons to Korea. Today, five officers are still serving in the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission – NNSC in Panmunjeom on the inner-Korean Military Demarcation Line.

For the UN military observers and liaison officers (known as «UN military experts on mission») serve alongside staff officers today and have been deployed on peace support missions in the Middle East, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, Mali, Kashmir and the Western Sahara. SWISSCOY’s mission in Kosovo is the largest peacekeeping operation for the Swiss Armed Forces to date. Since 1999, up to 165 soldiers have been deployed per contingent in support of NATO’s Kosovo Force (KFOR). The liaison and monitoring teams (LMTs) consist of military personnel who carry out many of the key tasks as observers and discussion leaders in deployment locations, and provide an early warning system for KFOR. By working closely with the local people and governmental and non-governmental organisations, they obtain important information that allows KFOR to make a comprehensive situation assessment. SWISSCOY also provides medical care, logistics services for road and air transport, and assists the military police and with ordnance disposal efforts.

In Bosnia-Herzegovina up to 20 Swiss nationals have been supporting the EUFOR mission ALTHEA in liaison and observation teams (LOTs) since 2004. They are stationed at well-known and potential hot spots and work in close collaboration with the local population, local authorities and international organisations working in the same region. The LOTs gather and pass on information to EUFOR headquarters for the purpose of its early warning system. As part of a mobile training team (MTT), up to six Swiss specialists – experts in small arms, ammunition and language – train the armed forces of Bosnia-Herzegovina on how to manage ammunition and weapons depots.
Swiss LOT members on patrol in Bosnia-Herzegovina.
For a considerable time the Swiss Armed Forces have also been engaged in humanitarian demining operations. Specialists for logistical, financial, administrative and IT databank management tasks are deployed to various UN missions worldwide. In Mozambique a DDR-expert (Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration) supports the UN-sponsored peace process. Furthermore, Swiss officers provide courses at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Ghana and the École de Maintien de la Paix Alioune Blondin Beye (EMPABB) in Mali, in which they train members of international armed forces, police officers and civilians in peace support missions.

Since 2016, the Swiss Armed Forces have been involved in the UN Triangular Partnership Project for African Rapid Deployment of Engineering Capabilities (UN TPP ARDEC), which trains African military engineering units in engineering work for camp, road and air base construction as a part of peacekeeping missions. Every year, professional NCOs from the Engineer/Rescue/NBC Training Unit provide «Training for Trainers Courses» and advanced training courses for construction machine operators in several African countries.

Members of the armed forces are stationed at the UN headquarters in New York and at the OSCE headquarters in Vienna.

The Swiss Armed Forces have committed themselves to a «Physical Security and Stockpile Management» (PSSM) engagement in Moldova, based on an OSCE mandate.
A Swiss officer doing a practical exercise as a part of SUNMOC.
THE SWISSINT TRAINING CENTRE

The SWISSINT Training Centre is in charge of mission-specific training of Swiss military personnel for voluntary service abroad in peacekeeping operations.

For the contingents that are sent to the KFOR mission in Kosovo and the EUFOR mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Training Centre conducts two comprehensive, mission-specific preparatory courses a year. Depending on the function and duties of the personnel concerned, the courses take up to three months.

Apart from these courses, future military experts on mission (military observers and liaison officers) from all over the world are trained for their demanding tasks on the UN-certified Swiss United Nations Military Observer Course (SUNMOC). To ensure appropriate training, the Training Centre has a staff that is operationally experienced and proficient in several languages. The operation-specific training sequences are checked and evaluated after each course to ensure that theoretical knowledge and practical skills for peacekeeping operations abroad are taught as effectively as possible.

Some courses provide the option to study peace support in general and are also open to civilians and guests from abroad. Furthermore, a specific security-training course is offered once a year to civilian partners such as international organisations (IOs), governmental organisations (GOs) and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The SWISSINT Training Centre is an accredited «Partnership for Peace Training and Education Centre».

A summary of current courses can be found on our website: www.armee.ch/peace-support.
A Swiss officer visiting a local school in Kashmir.
The command building of SWISSINT in Stans-Oberdorf.

Interior view of the course building.
PARTNERS

To ensure that SWISSINT is able to implement the armed forces’ peacekeeping mission at a tactical level, it relies on cooperation with a variety of agencies within and outside the armed forces:

**Partners within the DDPS and the armed forces**
The Security Policy in the DDPS’ General Secretariat (Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sport) and the International Relations Defence in the Armed Forces Staff provide the political or military-strategic assessments for any new deployment of the Swiss Armed Forces. As part of the Armed Forces Operations Command, SWISSINT assesses military feasibility, including issues such as recruitment sustainability. This is done after the UN or the OSCE has asked the Federal Council whether Switzerland is able to participate in a peacekeeping mission.

Within the Armed Forces Operations Command, the Air Force, the Land Forces and the military police all contribute to the operations. Specialists from the Command Support Organisation, the Armed Forces Logistics Organisation, and the Engineer/Rescue/NBC training unit’s NBC EOD Centre of Competence guarantee that the international obligations are met. Working with the Armed Forces College, the Armed Forces Staff and the Armed Forces Operations Command, they provide military and civilian professionals for key positions. More than 90% of the soldiers, NCOs and officers are conscripts who have been recruited on the open labour market.

**Partners within the Confederation**
Cooperation is institutionalised with all federal departments that are operationally involved in peacekeeping, safeguarding human rights and humanitarian aid. These are the FDFA (foreign affairs), the FDJP (justice and police) and the FDF (finance). Collaboration is particularly close with the FDFA, especially in the deployment locations. It assesses the foreign policy situation in the deployment locations and establishes contact with the relevant diplomatic missions.
Swiss officer on patrol in the Middle East.
National partners
With regard to training, SWISSINT also collaborates with the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) and swisspeace.

International partners
All peacekeeping operations carried out by the Swiss Armed Forces are based on United Nations or OSCE (Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe) mandates. As NATO and the European Union have also been entrusted with implementing UN mandates recently, they have also become important partners, particularly when it comes to deciding what peacekeeping activities are required. Depending on the mission, Switzerland collaborates with other armed forces – in the past, primarily those from Austria, Germany and the Netherlands. Switzerland also cooperates with these three nations in the area of mission-specific training.
A Swiss logistics expert assists with humanitarian demining efforts in South Sudan.

Swiss military observers are also stationed in the Western Sahara.
Men and women who are interested can apply to Swiss Armed Forces International Command SWISSINT for a term of service abroad with the Swiss Armed Forces. Specialists are sought from a variety of professions. More information on vacancies and application forms can be found on our website at www.peace-support.ch. As soon as the completed applications have been received by the human resources section and the basic requirements listed below have been met, the specific selection process begins (recruitment).

Candidates must be Swiss citizens, aged 18–65, who have completed a vocational apprenticeship or an academic degree, as well as basic military training. Women are also allowed to serve in certain capacities in SWISSCOY and EUFOR even without having done basic military training.

The first recruitment day is held at one of the regional recruitment centres of the armed forces. Candidate will be given a medical check-up, and their German and foreign language skills as well as driving ability may also be tested depending on their prospective function.

If all goes well on the first recruitment day, candidates are invited to the SWISSINT in Stans-Oberdorf. During this second recruitment day or the assessment, the men and women called up are advised on what forms of service are open to them and of the conditions of employment. Information can also be given on the salary where the specific post is known. A selection board assesses, based on a variety of criteria, whether the applicants are suited for a peacekeeping mission, and what the best options are for each applicant.

If the decision is positive they are invited to attend a multi-week training course at the SWISSINT Training Centre.
Roadshow presentations are held at exhibitions throughout Switzerland. Experienced personnel provide information at public events about opportunities to take part in military peace support missions.
Participation in peace-support operations of the Swiss Armed Forces is voluntary. This means that SWISSINT has to recruit a sufficient number of persons who are able to meet the demanding requirements.

SWISSINT’s personnel marketing team plays an important role in this task. It travels throughout Switzerland to explain the various tasks that peace support involves.

The personnel marketing team is accompanied by men and women who have served on peace support missions. They provide information on the various missions around the world at a wide variety of public events in towns, cities, universities and colleges and at numerous recruit school open days and other military events.

The «roadshow», presented using an «infomobile», is often used for informing and communicating with the public. Various other elements such as a UN observation tower, a training mine trail or a virtual patrol tour using 360° glasses bring the world of military peacekeeping closer to the public and allow them to experience the everyday life and the work of peacekeepers.

This public presence aims to encourage men and women to volunteer for peacekeeping operations; it raises public awareness of the third mission of the armed forces, international peace support.

You can find application forms and information on SWISSINT’s peacekeeping missions on the website www.peace-support.ch.
Departing from their camp, Swiss and Swedish officers take the blue bridge across the Military Demarcation Line (MDL) between North and South Korea to reach the well-known UN blue buildings in the Joint Security Area (JSA).

Craftspeople with expertise in various areas are in demand at SWISSCOY.
IMPRESSIONS FROM THE FIELD

Hans, 38, KFOR SWISSCOY staff officer
«Especially as career officer this operation enabled me to experience on a one to one basis, how a first deployment works and is affected by a changed security situation. I have been able to see that the military structures and procedures as well as operation specific training really work.»

Emilia, 38, warrant officer / LMT observer
«My assignment was a valuable experience in many ways. Seeing how people with different backgrounds find their place in a team and form a single unit, and working with people from different countries was very exciting and instructive.»

Jeremias, 25, SWISSCOY construction machine operator
«The operations allowed me to gain more experience in my specialist field. The camaraderie that bonds the members from all fields of expertise, occupations, ranks and backgrounds is unique.»

Hicham, 25, EUFOR LOT team commander
«We are obliged to such engagement by solidarity too. I must and want to contribute personally to peace. Not only do I see how well off we are in Switzerland, but also how deeply Switzerland’s engagement for peace and development is appreciated in Bosnia-Hercegovina.»

Sarah, 27, UN Military Expert on Mission UNTSO
«The operation enables me to gain valuable experience in a multi-national environment. Daily contacts with the local population give me deep insights into a foreign culture. Such valuable experience is only possible through this mission.»

Christian, 51, operations officer NNSC
«The experience gained during my modest contribution to peace and stability on the Korean peninsula has left me with lasting memories that will linger in my mind for many years to come.»
Thanks to the highly qualified conscript and professional soldiers who have been bringing their expertise to various missions around the world since 1953, when it comes to peace support operations, the Swiss Armed Forces and thus Switzerland itself are held in high regard by the international community. SWISSCOY’s current contributions within its engagement in Kosovo include the deployment of LMTs (liaison and monitoring teams), a helicopter detachment, explosive ordnance disposal teams and staff officers – all of which have substantially helped KFOR to accomplish its mission.

Swiss military personnel also provide valuable support to UN missions in the Middle East and in Africa. Local inhabitants, authorities and organisations trust them not only because of their expertise, but also because Switzerland is known to be neutral and has no colonial past.

There is considerable international respect for the contributions made by the Swiss Armed Forces. Our strength in peace support operations lies not in quantity but in quality – this will continue to be our focus in the future. The deployed members of our armed forces, the operation-specific training provided by SWISSINT and the essential advantage of our conscript system contribute to this quality: apart from military expertise, our soldiers also have considerable civilian knowledge and skills.

The Swiss Armed Forces International Command SWISSINT is a reliable partner that professionally accomplishes its peace support mission and prepares its military personnel excellently for their tasks.

Chief of Joint Operations Command / Deputy Chief of the Armed Forces
Lieutenant General Aldo C. Schellenberg
HOW TO FIND SWISS ARMED FORCES INTERNATIONAL COMMAND SWISSINT

Drive to Stans-Oberdorf via the A2, E35 motorway. After leaving the motorway, at the ‘Stans Süd’ (south) exit, please follow the yellow SWISSINT signs.
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